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C O N F I D E N T I A L RIGA 000732

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/12/2016
TAGS: [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [KTIA](#) [NATO](#) [LG](#)
SUBJECT: (C) SECOND REQUEST ON LATVIAN REQUEST FOR U.S. AIR
SECURITY ASSIATANCE FOR NATO SUMMIT

REF: A) RIGA 496 B) 05 RIGA 373 AND PREVIOUS

Classified By: Ambassador Catherine Todd Bailey. Reason: 1.4 (a & d)

11. (U) This is an action request. See para 4.

12. (C/NOFORN) Ref A relayed request from Latvian MOD Slakteris, on behalf of GOL, for USG to provide air security assistance for the NATO Summit to be held in Riga November 28 - 29. To date, post has received no formal response from Washington. However, we understand that SecDef Rumsfeld told Slakteris at their July 31 meeting in Washington that the request was approved. We further understand that planning is proceeding and forces have been allocated to the mission. COMUSAFE, General Hobbins, visited Riga September 11 for discussions with GOL officials on the mission. We also understand that consideration is being given to a mission that would cover the time that President Bush is in Estonia on a bilateral visit prior to the NATO summit. However, we still have not provided anything to the GOL acknowledging our preparedness to take on the mission for the summit nor have we received any guidance that spells out any limitations to the mission.

13. (C/NOFORN) As further noted in ref A, we will need to conclude an agreement with the GOL on the terms under which such an air security mission would operate, to include authorization to use force, status of forces, command and control arrangements, preparations for a renegade aircraft and other matters. Ref B provides the model from President Bush's May 2005 visit to Latvia and, with only small modifications to acknowledge the fact of the summit and, possibly, support for the Tallinn stop, we would think very similar language should suffice. USAFE has produced a suggested draft (e-mailed to EUR/RPM). With parliamentary elections scheduled for October 7, the government will go in to caretaker mode until a government can be formed, which may be delayed until after the summit. General Hobbins heard on his visit for MOD State Secretary Rinkevics that getting such an agreement through cabinet prior to elections would be the best course of action and provide the least opportunity for surprises or unexpected difficulties. We agree and note that, in addition to the political desire to move forward, there is a practical desire on both sides to conduct exercises of the arrangements beginning in mid-October, which would require the agreement to be in place

14. (C/REL Latvia) Action request: Post repeats its ref A request that Washington provide language for Ambassador Bailey to respond to Minister Slakteris' request and that we be provided soonest with text for an exchange of dip notes to cover the operations of the air security mission in Latvia.

